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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

17 February 1951

SUBJECT: NIE-29: YUGOSLAVIA
Suggested Revisions

Insert after paragraph 1 of Discussion:

CONSIDERATIONS WHICH MIGHT IMPEL THE USSR OR THE SATELLITES
TO ATTACK YUGOSLAVIA IN 1951

The Kremlin might estimate that:

- a. The recovery of Yugoslavia's military potential and strategic position would add materially to the power potential of the Soviet Orbit, and would facilitate the attainment of Soviet objectives in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean area;
- b. The continuation in power of the Tito regime, its economic rehabilitation, its military development, and its association with the West would constitute an intolerable obstacle to the attainment of ultimate Soviet objectives, and perhaps a threat to the security of the Balkan Satellites;
- c. A successful attack on Yugoslavia would demoralize and intimidate the people of Western Europe, dissuade

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them from resisting Soviet aggression, and render them susceptible to appeals for accommodation with the USSR;

d. An attack on Yugoslavia would divert Western resources and attention from the Far East and thus would facilitate the early attainment of some of the USSR's Far East objectives;

e. Tito's continued defiance of Soviet authority will encourage resistance to Soviet domination among the European Satellites, and will promote heresy in Communist ranks throughout the world;

f. Yugoslavia's capabilities to resist attack have been impaired by current economic difficulties and are presently at low ebb, but, because of Western aid, will henceforth rapidly improve;

g. The Western Powers presently lack the necessary unity to act promptly and effectively in behalf of Yugoslavia and are too heavily committed in Asia to furnish Yugoslavia with effective materiel assistance;

h. If the Kremlin were planning early military action elsewhere in Europe, it might consider the elimination of the flanking threat from Yugoslavia an essential preliminary precaution.

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CONSIDERATIONS WHICH MIGHT DETER THE USSR OR THE SATELLITES
FROM AN ATTACK ON YUGOSLAVIA IN 1951

The Kremlin would have to recognize, however, that realization of the gains outlined above would be far from certain, even if the attack on Yugoslavia were militarily successful. There are, moreover, a number of considerations which might cause the Kremlin to refrain from such an attack, at least throughout 1951:

- a. Western concern over Yugoslavia is steadily increasing and already may have reached a point where a Soviet or Satellite attack would provoke direct Western intervention and lead to general war;
- b. A Soviet attack might increase rather than decrease European unity and will to resist;
- c. An attack might sharply accelerate the US and NATO rearmament programs and might cause the Western Powers rapidly to develop the defensive capabilities of other possible Soviet targets, such as Greece and Turkey;
- d. The Kremlin might estimate that the Satellite armed forces are not yet capable of successfully attacking Yugoslavia and that their relative capabilities for doing so will be more favorable some time after 1951;
- e. The Kremlin might further estimate that a Satellite attack, even if initially successful, might provoke

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- Western counteraction which would not stop^{at}/Yugoslavia's borders but would carry through into the adjacent Satalites and bring about the overthrow of existing Soviet-controlled regimes;
- f. The Kremlin might believe that the use of naked force against Titoism would confirm the original Yugoslav charges concerning the nature and objectives of Soviet Communism and would be difficult to justify in ideology and propaganda;
- g. The Kremlin might believe that its chances of attaining its objectives regarding Yugoslavia by peaceful means are still favorable.

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1951 must be considered a serious possibility.

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SUBJECT: BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON ATTITUDES OF THE YUGOSLAV LEADERSHIP TOWARD POSSIBLE INVASION AND WESTERN ARMS AID.

1. In speeches before the Peoples Assembly in late December, both Tito and Kardelj emphasized the growing satellite threat. The parliament passed a record defense budget (29.1 billion dinars) in order to strengthen the country against this threat.

2. In speeches connected with Yugoslav Army Day, 21 December, at least three military leaders referred to the USSR's aggressive designs against Yugoslavia and the increasing threat from the Soviet satellite. The Assistant Minister of National Defense made similar charges on 25 December in Zagreb.

3. In an interview with a UP correspondent on 6 January, Tito stressed that the systematic satellite propaganda campaign, charges of border violations, and border clashes were all part of an organized campaign to represent Yugoslavia as a potential aggressor, so that, in the event that the Cominform decided upon direct action, satellite measures would appear justified. Similar statements were included in Marshal Tito's order of the day on 22 December.

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leaders anticipate a serious crisis this spring with grave danger of a satellite attack on Yugoslavia. ^{1/}

5. In conversation with Ambassador Allen on 23 and 24 January, Kardelj reviewed Yugoslav policy with respect to collective security and emphasized Yugoslav adherence to this principle if applied in defense of "national independence" rather than "colonialism." Kardelj failed, however, to request arms aid, as had been anticipated. This failure, combined with a change in Kardelj's demeanor between the meetings of the 23rd and 24th, was interpreted by Ambassador Allen as clearly indicating that a serious and possibly critical debate was in progress within the Politburo on the question of Western, particularly US, military aid. (On 5 February, Ambassador Allen reported his belief that a basic decision to seek substantial military aid from the West had been reached.)

6. On 29 January, Ambassador Allen reported that, in his opinion, the Yugoslav leaders had convinced themselves that the next Cominform attack is more likely to be against Western Germany rather than Yugoslavia. The Ambassador further suspects that the Yugoslavs are building up a position to justify their neutrality if Germany should become a "second Korea", but he nevertheless believes that Yugoslavia would enter the conflict should it spread,

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regardless of whether or not Yugoslavia were attacked. The opinion that Germany is next on the Cominform schedule was expressed explicitly by a member of the Foreign Liaison Section of the Yugoslav Army and by the Yugoslav Minister in Brussels.

7. Tito told Congressman Kennedy on 25 January that he did not expect an attack on Yugoslavia this spring but that "he (Tito) was no prophet". Tito further stated that the question of arms from the West was a delicate problem since he must avoid provoking the Cominform. He also expressed concern over West German rearmament.

8. [] who saw Tito []

[] gained the impression that he was greatly concerned over a possible attack on Yugoslavia this spring.

9. In discussions with Assistant Secretary of State Perkins, Tito stated he wished to avoid public debate on military supplies for Yugoslavia and hoped to obtain them through long term commercial loans. After Secretary Perkins had explained that further substantial aid would require Congressional appropriations, Tito replied that perhaps for the present Yugoslavia would have to depend on its own industry for military supplies. Tito added that if Yugoslavia at any time became convinced that the Cominform had definitely decided upon an attack against Yugoslavia, the position of the Yugoslav Government might change promptly since the reasons for present circumspection would disappear.

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10. Secretary Perkins also informed Tito and Kardelj that the U.S. Ambassadors to the Cominform countries did not think that either the USSR or its satellites were preparing for an imminent attack anywhere in Europe. Tito and Kardelj agreed with this conclusion. Kardelj expressed appreciation and satisfaction with Secretary Acheson's statement concerning the U.S. attitude toward any aggression against Yugoslavia.

11. The most direct Yugoslav request for arms aid was made early in February to Prime Minister Attlee in London by Milovan Djilas. The request was, however, in general terms and did not specify the amount or nature of the assistance envisaged by the Yugoslavs.

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